there are 436 LPG distributorships, with over 36.69 lakhs customer population, functioning in Tamil Nadu.

(c) During the last 5 years over 17.02 lakh connections were released in Tamil Nadu.

(d) In addition to the locations pending from previous Marketing Plans, 155 new LPG distributorships have been included in the LPG Marketing Plan 1996—98 for Tamil Nadu. Locations included in the Marketing Plan are advertised by the oil companies from time to time. Selection of distributor is made by the Dealer Selection Board on merit on the basis of interview. It generally takes about 6-12 months for commissioning of the dealerships/ distributorships from the date of interview. Instructions have been issued to the oil companies to release about 1 crore new connections during the current year.

LPG Distribution in Lambagaon and Pragpur of Himachal Pradesh

3032. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the answer to Starred Question 57 and Unstarred Qustion 116 given in the Rajya Sabha on 25th February, 1999 and 24th February, 2000 respectively and state :

(a) the reasons for not conducting the interviews for the LPG distributorship at Lambagaon and Pragpur, while the same was advertised on 27th January, 1999;

(b) by which time the Dealer Selection Board is likely to be reconstituted;

(c) whether Government proposes to select the distributors for the same from amongst the Kith and Kin to those killed in Kargil war; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) Indian Oil Corporation had issued advertisement inviting applications for setting up LPG distributorship at Pragpur on 24-12-1997 and again readvertised the location on 18-5-1998. Lambagaon was advertised on 29-12-1997 and again readvertised on 21-5-1998. Selection for the above distributorships could not take place due to non-functioning of Dealer Selection Boards on account of announcement of General Elections

and Enforcement of Model Code of Conduct. The Dealer Selection Boards have since been dissolved.

(c) and (d) Government has decided to allot RO dealerships and LPG distributorships to the widows and next of kin of martyrs of OP Vijay (Kargil) under a Special Scheme.

Supply of Piped LPG

3033. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether GAIL has laid out plans to supply piped LPG gas in some areas of the country;

(b) if so, the areas where GAIL has plans to operate a system of piped LPG;

(c) whether Andhra Pradesh is one of the State selected by GAIL for laying LPG pipelines;

(d) if so, the areas in Andhra Pradesh which will get piped LPG through GAIL; and

(e) the schedule of completion of these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI E. PONNUSWAMY): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, GAIL has plans only for bulk transportation of LPG through pipelines. Currently, GAIL is laying an LPG pipeline from Kandla to Loni *via* Delhi for transporting LPG in bulk from Western region to Northern region.

(c) to (e) GAIL is in the process of undertaking various studies/surveys for preparation of detailed feasibility report for construction of a network of about 600 kms pipeline to transport LPG from Vizag to Secunderabad *via* Rajahmundry, Vijayawada and Suryapet in Andhra Pradesh. The completion schedule of the project is 36 months from the date of commencement.